

Message Text

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43

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SNM-02 SS-15 SP-02 MMS-01 PER-01

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O 071730Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO DEA HQS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7594

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HQS FOR EN/DURKIN, EOIL/CUSACK, IG/BELK, OP/BALLARDD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, VE
SUBJECT: CANCELLATION OF ALL PCS MOVES TO CARACAS

1. AT 4:00 P.M., 6 FEBRUARY 75, EMBASSY'S POLITICAL COUNSELOR MET WITH THE VENEZUELAN FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL WHO HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MINISTRY'S INVOLVEMENT WITH DEA ACTIVITIES, DR. HUGO ALVAREZ PIFANO, TO ADVISE HIM OF NAMES AND DIPLOMATIC STATUS OF ARRIVING SPECIAL AGENTS BANCROFT AND SHEPPARD. ALVAREZ PIFANO TOLD EMBASSY OFFICER THAT AT THIS TIME THE MINISTRY WILL NOT SACTION ANY INCREASE IN THE CURRENT NUMBER OF DEA OFFICER PERSONNEL ASSIGNED IN VENEZUELA, NOTWITHSTANDING THE PREVIOUSLY SIGNED DIPLOMATIC NOTE APPROVING THE ADDITION OF TWO AGENTS TO THE CARACAS DISTRICT OFFICE STAFF. DR. ALVAREZ PIFANO STATED FURTHER THAT ALTHOUGH HE UNDERSTANDS PERFECTLY THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS AND DISTRICT OFFICE FUNCTIONS WITHIN CARACAS THAT THE TOTAL DEA COMPLEMENT IS TO REMAIN STATIC, AS IS, AT 5 OFFICERS AND 10 ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL. (WE WILL, HOWEVER, SEEK AMBASSADOR'S APPROVAL TO UTILIZE EMPLOYEES OF THE EMBASSY ON A CONTRACT BASIS.) ALVAREZ PIFANO RELATED THAT DEA HELD IN HIGH ESTEEM WITHIN THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT, THAT ONLY LAST FRIDAY HE HAD A MEETING WITH A HIGH PTJ OFFICIAL WHO PRAISED DEA AND ADVISED HIM THAT THEY NEED MORE MANPOWER AND IN FACT

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MENTIONED BY NAME THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR AND SAIC HERRING AND

STATED THAT BOTH ARE HELD IN HIGH ESTEEM IN VENEZUELA.

2. THE REASON FOR HIS ACTIONS, ALVAREZ PIFANO RELATED, IS BECAUSE OF THE CURRENT PRESSURE THAT THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT IS FEELING AS A RESULT OF THE CURRENT PUBLIC FUROR OVER CIA ACTIVITIES IN LATIN AMERICA. HE STATED FURTHER THAT HIS GOVERNMENT FULLY REALIZES THAT DEA IS SOLELY INVOLVED IN SUPPRESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL NARCOTIC TRAFFIC AND THAT VENEZUELA WISHES TO ASSIST IN THIS EFFORT, BUT THAT HOSTILE ELEMENTS AND/OR OTHERS ARE CLOSELY WATCHING THE REPORTAGE OF CIA ACTIVITIES. ALVAREZ PIFANO STATED THAT WITH THE ADVERSE ATMOSPHERE BEING FOMENTED RE THE NOMINATION OF AMBASSADOR DESIGNATE SHLAUDEMAN PLUS THE WIDE COVERAGE AND STATEMENTS OF CIA ACTIVITIES THAT THE GOV DOES NOT WANT ANY INCREASE IN DEA STAFF AT THIS TIME; THAT AS SOON AS THE ATMOSPHERE IMPROVES HE WOULD MOST HEARTILY AGREE TO OUR REQUEST FOR AN AUGMENTATION OF STAFF, BOTH REGIONAL AND DISTRICT.

3. WHEN QUERIED AS TO WHEN HE MIGHT RETURN WITH THIS AUGMENTATION REQUEST, EMBASSY OFFICER WAS ADVISED THAT THE EMBASSY WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO KNOW. EMBASSY OFFICER'S JUDGEMENT IS THAT THE PRESENT ADVERSE LOCAL CLIMATE WILL PREVAIL FOR AT LEAST TWO AND PERHAPS AS MUCH AS FOUR MONTHS AND IF EMBASSY OFFICER AND I WERE TO HAZARD A GUESS, TIME FRAME WOULD BE CLOSER TO FOUR THAN TO TWO.

4. REGIONAL MANAGEMENT WILL RAISE THIS ISSUE WITH THE AMBASSADOR IN AN EFFORT TO DETERMINE IF SOME OTHER APPROACH AT THIS TIME TO THE GOV IS FEASIBLE.

5. HOWEVER, IN LIGHT OF THE STATEMENTS MADE BY GOV REPRESENTATIVES TO EMBASSY OFFICER, WE HAVE NO CHOICE AT THIS TIME BUT TO CANCEL ALL PCS MOVES FORTHWITH WHICH INCLUDES SPECIAL AGENTS BANCROFT AND SHEPPARD AND SECRETARY RHINEHART. WE HAVE ONE VACANCY FOR SECRETARIAL POSITION WHICH WILL BE FILLED BY LOCAL HIRE.

6. REQUEST EOIL NOTIFY CONCERNED PERSONNEL IMMEDIATELY AND ADVISE THEM OF DELAY.

7. SINCE THE CONCERNED SA'S ARE NOW AVAILABLE, REQUEST THAT THEY BE QUERIED AS TO THEIR FEELINGS RE ASSIGNMENT TO OTHER POSTS WITHIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REGION 18. IF AFFIRMATIVE, EOIL WILL BE ADVISED OF ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENT. FROM RD BACHRACH. DECONTROL PERMISSIBLE BY DEA ONLY.
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